

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, ENRG, EEC, UK

SUBJECT: UK PERM DEL OFFICIAL ASSESSES BRITISH PRODUCER-CONSUMER
CONFERENCE POSITION

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: A SOURCE IN THE BRITISH PERM DEL TO THE EC, WHO HAS IN THE PAST PROVEN TO BE EXTREMELY WELL INFORMED, HAS "PRIVATELY" COMMENTED TO US ON UK FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN'S INSISTENCE AT THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS COUNCIL OF OCTOBER 6-7 ON A SEPARATE SEAT FOR HMG AT THE PRODUCER-CONSUMER CONFERENCE. THE SOURCE SAID HE WOULD "STRONGLY DISCOURAGE" ANY SPECULATION BY THE U.S. THAT CALLAGHAN TOOK HIS POSITION AS A TACTICAL MOVE TO BRING PRESSURE TO BEAR ON HIS EC COLLEAGUES. IN THIS SOURCE'S VIEW, THE KEY TO ANY POSSIBLE COMMUNITY REACTION IS HELD BY THE DUTCH, WHOSE DECISION TO SEEK OR NOT TO SEEK SEPARATE REPRESENTATION WILL GO A LONG WAY TO DETERMINING THE ACTIONS OF OTHER EC MEMBER STATES. END SUMMARY.

2. A SENIOR OFFICIAL AT THE BRITISH PERMANENT DELEGATION TO THE EC, WHO HAS IN THE PAST BEEN EXTREMELY ACCURATE IN HIS ASSESSMENTS OF BOTH BRITISH POLICY AND THE OUTCOME OF COMMUNITY DISCUSSIONS, HAS TOLD
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US "PRIVATELY" THAT HE WOULD "STRONGLY DISCOURAGE"

ANY ANALYSIS ON THE PART OF THE U.S. THAT UK FOREIGN MINISTER CALLAGHAN WAS MERELY TIGHTENING DOWN THE SCREWS ON HIS COMMUNITY PARTNERS IN ORDER TO FORCE THEM TO ADOPT A MANDATE FOR COMMUNITY REPRESENTATION AT THE PRODUCER-CONSUMER CONFERENCE FAVORABLE TO BRITISH INTERESTS. THIS SOURCE SAID THAT, AS A RESULT OF HIS CONTACT WITH CALLAGHAN BOTH BEFORE AND DURING THE EC FOREIGN MINISTERS COUNCIL SESSION IN LUXEMBOURG ON OCTOBER 6-7, HE BELIEVES THAT CALLAGHAN MEANT EXACTLY WHAT HE SAID AND IS "STRAIGHT FORWARDLY" SEEKING A SEPARATE UK SEAT AT THE PRODUCER-CONSUMER CONFERENCE. ASKED THE MOTIVES FOR THIS ACTION, OUR SOURCE SAID HE BELIEVES CALLAGHAN BASICALLY FEELS THAT THE PRODUCER-CONSUMER CONFERENCE HAS NOW EXPANDED FAR BEYOND THE DISCUSSION OF ENERGY AND RELATED QUESTIONS AND THAT CONSEQUENTLY THE UK MUST INSIST UPON ITS OWN SEAT. HE NOTED THAT THE OBJECT LESSON OF THE FRENCH DECISION REGARDING IMPORTS OF ITALIAN WINE, THE GERMAN DEMANDS FOR A REDUCTION IN COMMUNITY AGRICULTURAL EXPENDITURES AND EVEN THE PERIODIC HOLDING OF THE COUNCIL SESSION IN LUXEMBOURG DESPITE THE INCREASED COSTS HAD NOT BEEN LOST ON THE FOREIGN SECRETARY. CALLAGHAN FEELS THAT, IN VIEW OF THESE EXAMPLES OF SPECIAL ALLOWANCES OR DEALS MADE ON BEHALF OF INDIVIDUAL MEMBER COUNTRIES THE BRITISH HAVE NOT ONLY SUBSTANTIVE REASONS FOR INSISTING UPON A SEPARATE SEAT BUT AMPLE PRECEDENT FOR THEIR ACTION.

3. ASKED WHAT WOULD HAPPEN NEXT, OUR SOURCE CONCEDED THE UK'S ACTION HAD PLACED THE OTHER EC MEMBER STATES IN A DIFFICULT POSITION. WHILE HE WOULD NOT FLATLY RULE IT OUT, HE SAID HE THOUGHT IT "MOST UNLIKELY" THAT THE UK WOULD GIVE UP ITS DEMAND FOR A SEPARATE SEAT, ALTHOUGH HMG WOULD CONTINUE TO WORK TOWARD AN ACCEPTABLE COMMUNITY MANDATE. IF SUCH A MANDATE WERE ADOPTED, OUR SOURCE SAID HE THOUGHT THE BRITISH WOULD FOLLOW IT AS LONG AS THE DISCUSSIONS WERE NOW WITHIN THE COMPETENCE OF THE COMMUNITY. THE OTHER MEMBER STATES, HE NOTED, MUST NOW DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT TO SEEK SEPARATE REPRESENTATION

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OR TO CONTINUE EFFORTS TO PROTECT THEIR VARIOUS INTERESTS SOLELY WITHIN AN EC FRAMEWORK. WHILE OUR SOURCE BELIEVES THAT GERMAN AND FRENCH VIEWS WILL BE SIGNIFICANT, HE SAID THAT IN THIS REGARD THE DUTCH HOLD THE KEY, BECAUSE THE FRENCH WILL HANG BACK IN AN EFFORT TO INSURE THE CONTINUED VIABILITY OF THE CONFERENCE AND THE GERMANS WILL WAIT TO SEE "WHICH WAY THE WIND IS BLOWING" BEFORE MAKING ANY MOVE. THE

DUTCH GOVERNMENT, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS NOT HEAVY
OIL TRADING AND CONSUMER INTERESTS TO DEFEND AND
WOULD BE THE MOST LIKELY MEMBER STATE TO FEEL THAT
SINCE THE COMMUNITY FABRIC WAS ALREADY RIPPED, NO
FURTHER HARM COULD COME FROM AN APPLICATION FOR
THEIR OWN SEAT. GREENWALD

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